Johann Sebastian

# BACH

## Suite in E Minor

## BWV 996

Unfingered Edition

WERNER
GUITAR
EDITIONS

**Suite in E Minor, BWV 996**

Unfingered Edition, Edited by Bradford Werner

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***This is the unfingered edition. A fully fingered edition and tab edition are available at Werner Guitar Editions.***

## About this Edition

I've played through this suite for years but wanted to create my own edition based on the Johann Gottfried Walther (1684–1748) manuscript while curiously looking at the Heinrich Nikolaus Gerber (1702–1775) which are both available on IMSLP. I believe my additional unfingered edition will be of great interest to professional guitarists just as the fingered edition will be to students. Although any performance of this suite on the guitar will require some editing due to register, I wanted my score to embrace as much of the manuscript as possible.

These pieces are advanced in level and are not always idiomatic to the six string guitar. They were likely written for the lute-harpsichord (lautenwerk), an uncommon Baroque keyboard instrument. For a variety of reasons and a few surviving lute tablature manuscripts (for other similar works) the suites became popularly known as the *Lute Suites*. Bach was familiar with lute players of the day such as Sylvius Leopold Weiss (1687–1750) and so it is not inconceivable that he could have imagined or even intended a lute to perform the works. For this suite, in terms of the manuscript, performance difficulty, key signature, and suitability, this is a keyboard composition. However, the overall lighter texture compared to his keyboard works hints at the texture capable by a lute. Nevertheless, modern guitar players have embraced the work and have found various arranging solutions for successful performance. Any serious performer will want to consult various editors but I hope this edition is useful and engaging.

**Unfingered Edition** - The free unfingered edition of this work is available so you can add your own fingerings and create your own edition.

## Performance Notes

**Slurs** - For the unfingered edition I have removed all slurs to allow the performer ultimate flexibility in interpretation.

**Editing Comments** - Not all edits are mentioned below. Due to the reduced register of the modern guitar compared to the keyboard or lute many changes have been made to the octave of voices, number of voices in chords, and entire musical lines. Depending on the strength of the motive or sequence, my arranging choices follow either motivic unity or voice register continuity. I have mentioned some important moments below while leaving the smaller edits as a natural part of my arrangement without need of mention. Register issues refer to the small range of the guitar compared to a lute or keyboard, this usually involves raising the music up an octave if practical.

**Praeludio-Presto**

**Bar 3** - Due to register, the third beat phrase has been raised two octaves for motivic unity.

**Bar 7, 9** - The chords have been reduced to less voices due to register and tight voicing.

**Bar 34** - The bass note on the third beat is originally a low D.

**Allemande**

The manuscript notation does not work nicely in modern notation on one staff. Other editions have tried to find various solutions to this rather small issue. The open ended ties in my edition simply indicate to the performer to sustain harmony as needed to those arpeggiated motifs.

**Courante**

**Bar 1** - The tied G may need to be released early depending on your comfort level with the stretch.

**Bar 10** - An inner F sharp has been removed from the final chord as it disrupts the fingering at a crucial cadence.

**Sarabande**

**Bar 10, 13, 14,17, 20** - I have not included the rhythmic indication for quintuplets or septuplets to stay closer to the manuscript. Whenever I add the indication the score looks overly technical and unnatural in terms of Baroque music.

**Bar 18-19** - The tie is included for visual voice-leading purposes but can not be held as indicated.

**Bar 15** - The original bass line of beat two is down an octave due to register issues.

**Gigue**

**Parenthesis -** The are a number of notes in parenthesis indicating possible editorial removals due to performance difficulty. I recommend removing them if a fast tempo is desired.

**Bar 5-6 -** The manuscript passage is not possible due to the low register but I've chosen motivic unity over voice continuity, this is noticeable when the B jumps down to A in the beginning of bar 7.

**Bar 7 -** The final D is an octave below in the manuscript but this is common practice in lute works of the era such as the works of Weiss. Regardless, the original bar is significantly rewritten in other editions whereas I've kept to the original despite this unfortunate octave displacement.

**Bar 15** - I have chosen F natural (as opposed to F sharp) for the disputed note in beat 1. The motive in the next beat is also a dominant 7th chord leading me to make the first beat into a G dominant 7.

**Bar 16** - The upper voices have been combined into one for rhythmic clarity.

**Bar 17-18** - Many editors rewrite this section due to the difficulty of performing it at faster tempos. I have kept the manuscript version as it is somewhat playable. The notes in parenthesis may be left out for playability at faster tempos.

**Bar 20** - The upper voice in this bar has been raised an octave due to register.

## Legend

**Right Hand Fingering:** p = thumb / i = index / m = middle / a = ring / c = pinky

**Left Hand Fingering:** 1 = index / 2 = middle / 3 = ring finger / 4 = pinky
Fingering in parenthesis are optional but approved.

**Barre Abbreviations:**
BV3 = Barre at the 5th fret, over three strings (E, B, G Strings)
BV5 = Barre at the 5th fret, over five strings (E, B, G, D, A, Strings)
BIII2 = Barre at the 3rd fret, over two strings (E, B Strings)

Piv. = Pivot Barre, a technique where the player either pivots into a barre, releases a barre while allowing certain notes to sustain, or avoiding a finger jump to a new string.

Hinge or hBV = Hinge Barre, a barre only over some of the strings while allowing open strings to sustain. Often used to sustain a previous bass note or prepare for a note that would require an awkward jump.

**Position Numbers:**
II. = play in second position (1st finger around the second fret)
V. = play in fifth position (1st finger around the fifth fret)
VII. = play in seventh position (1st finger around the seventh fret)

**String Numbers:**
(1) = 1st string (E)
(3) = 3rd string (G)
(5) = 5th string (A)

Notes, rests, or ornaments in parenthesis or brackets are optional for performance ease, editorial, or highlight a missing element of notation due to repeats or inconsistencies in the manuscript.

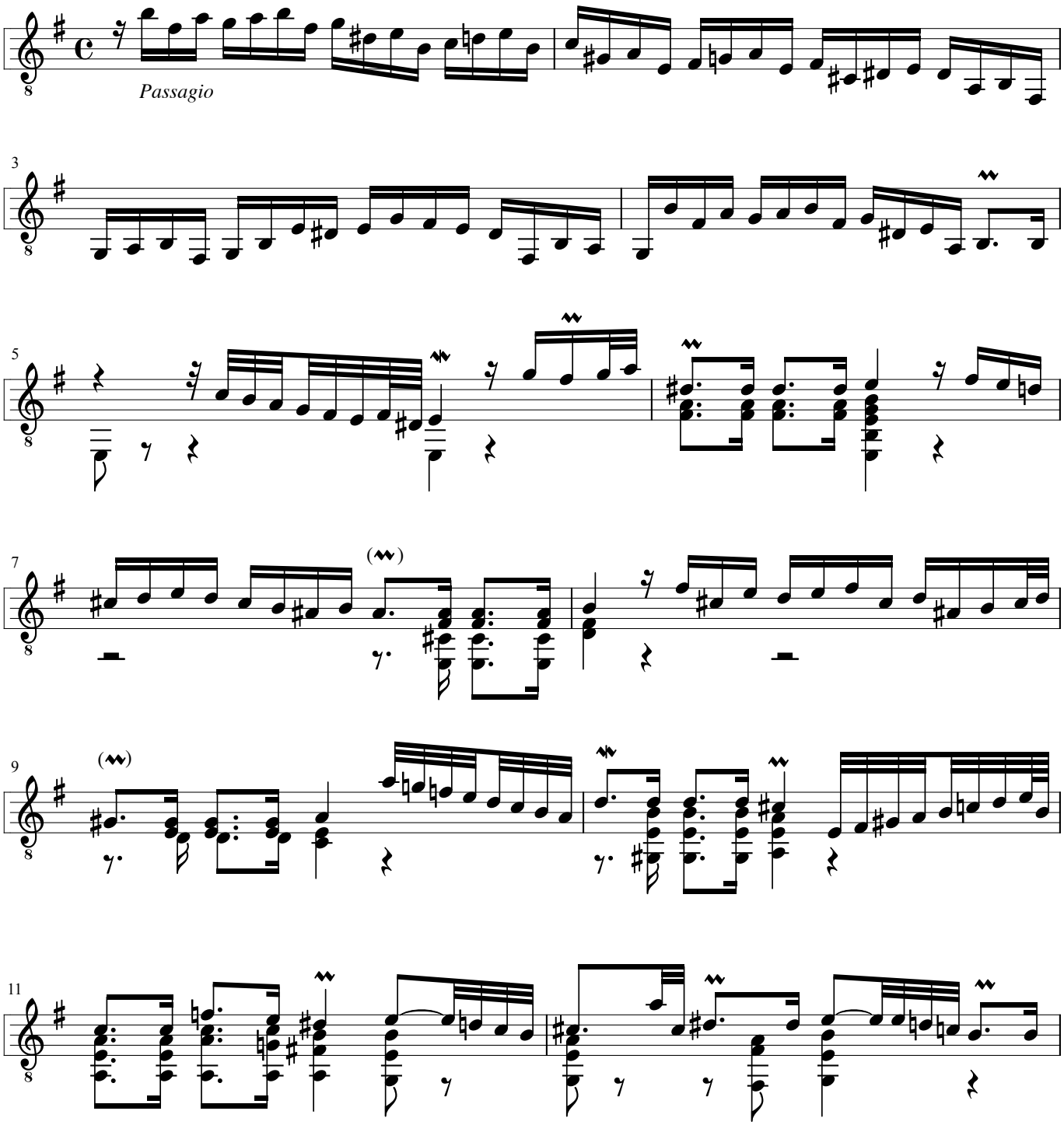
# Suite in E Minor

*BWV 996*

*Unfingered Edition*

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685 - 1750)

**Praeludio**

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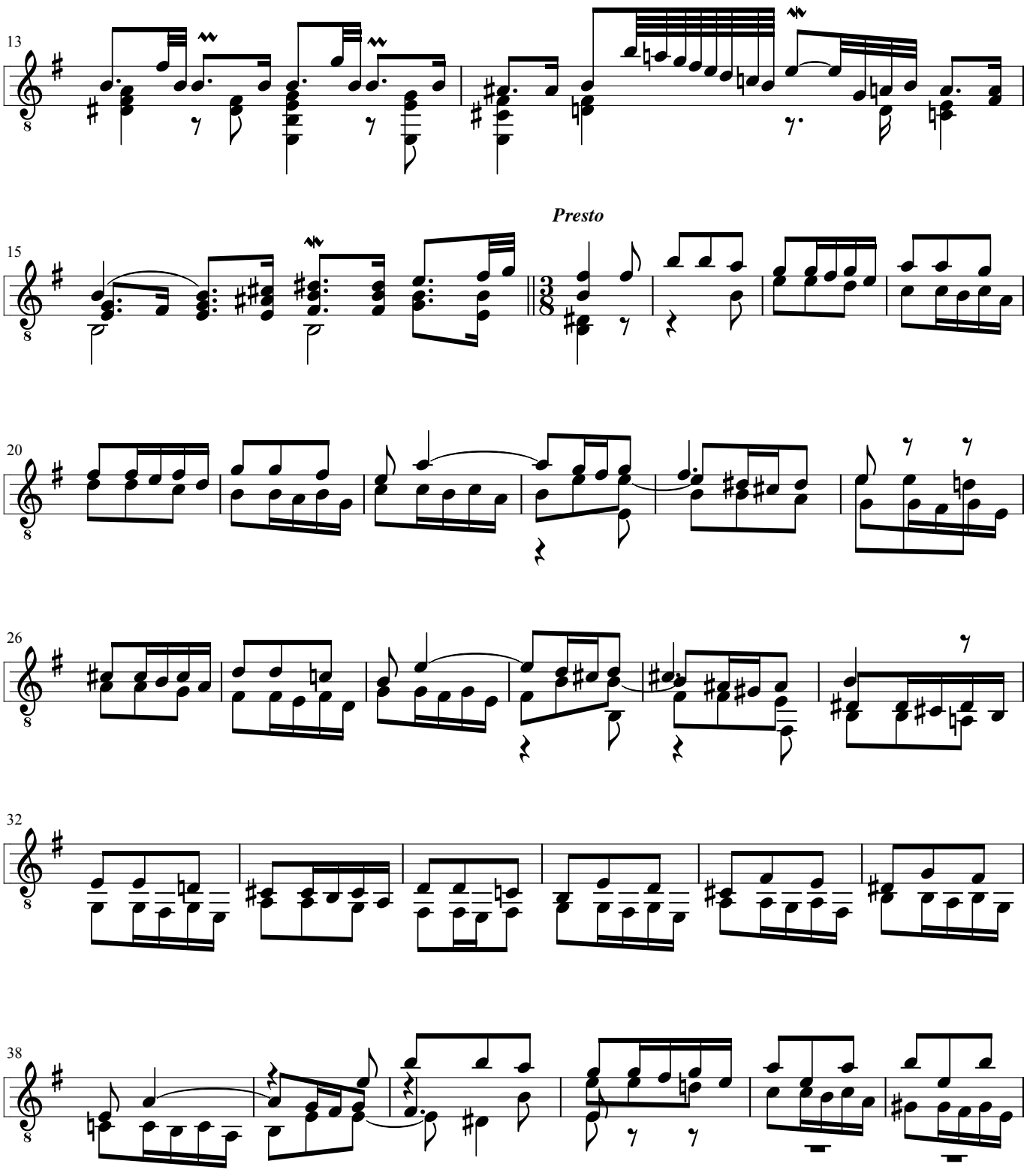


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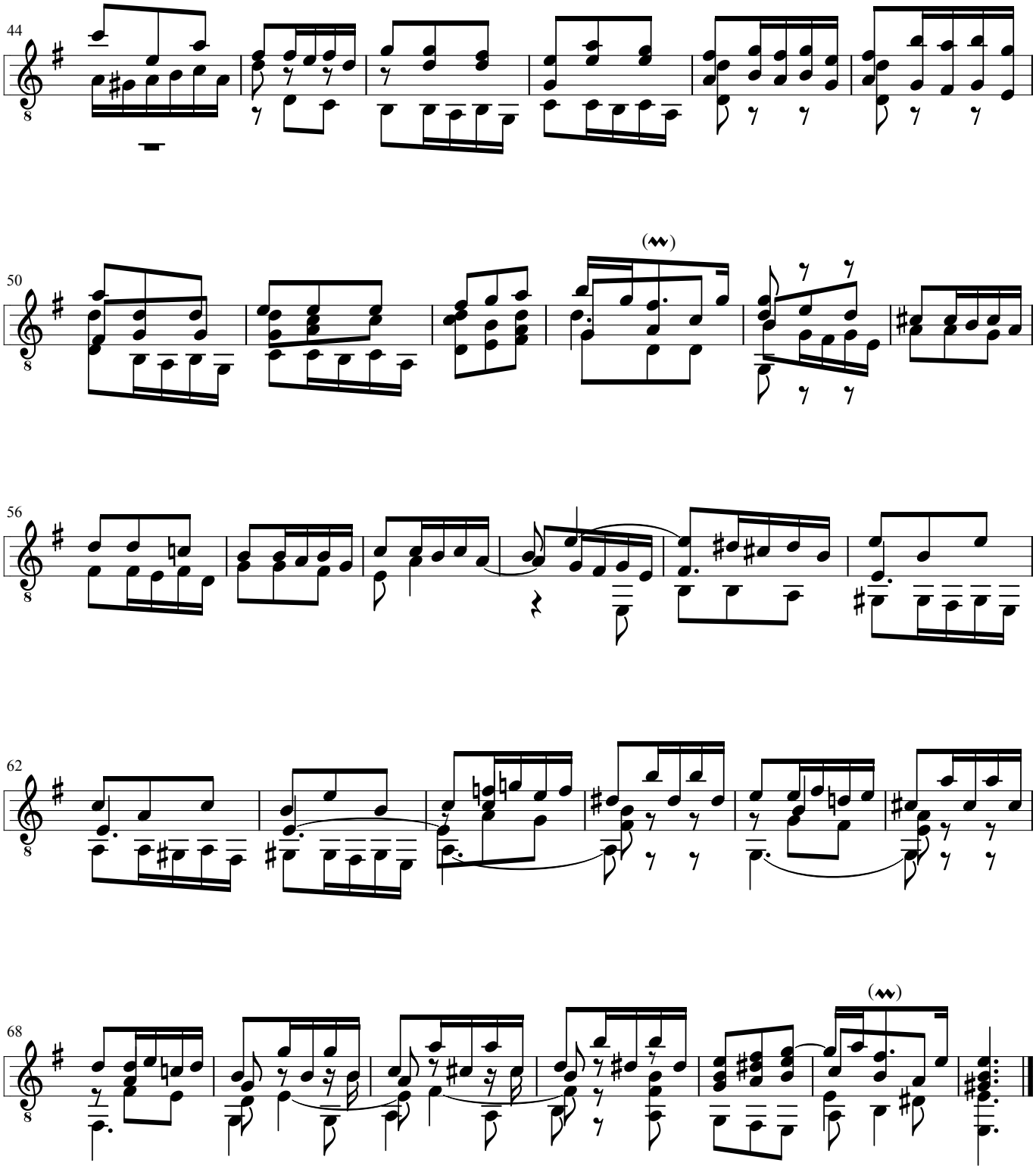


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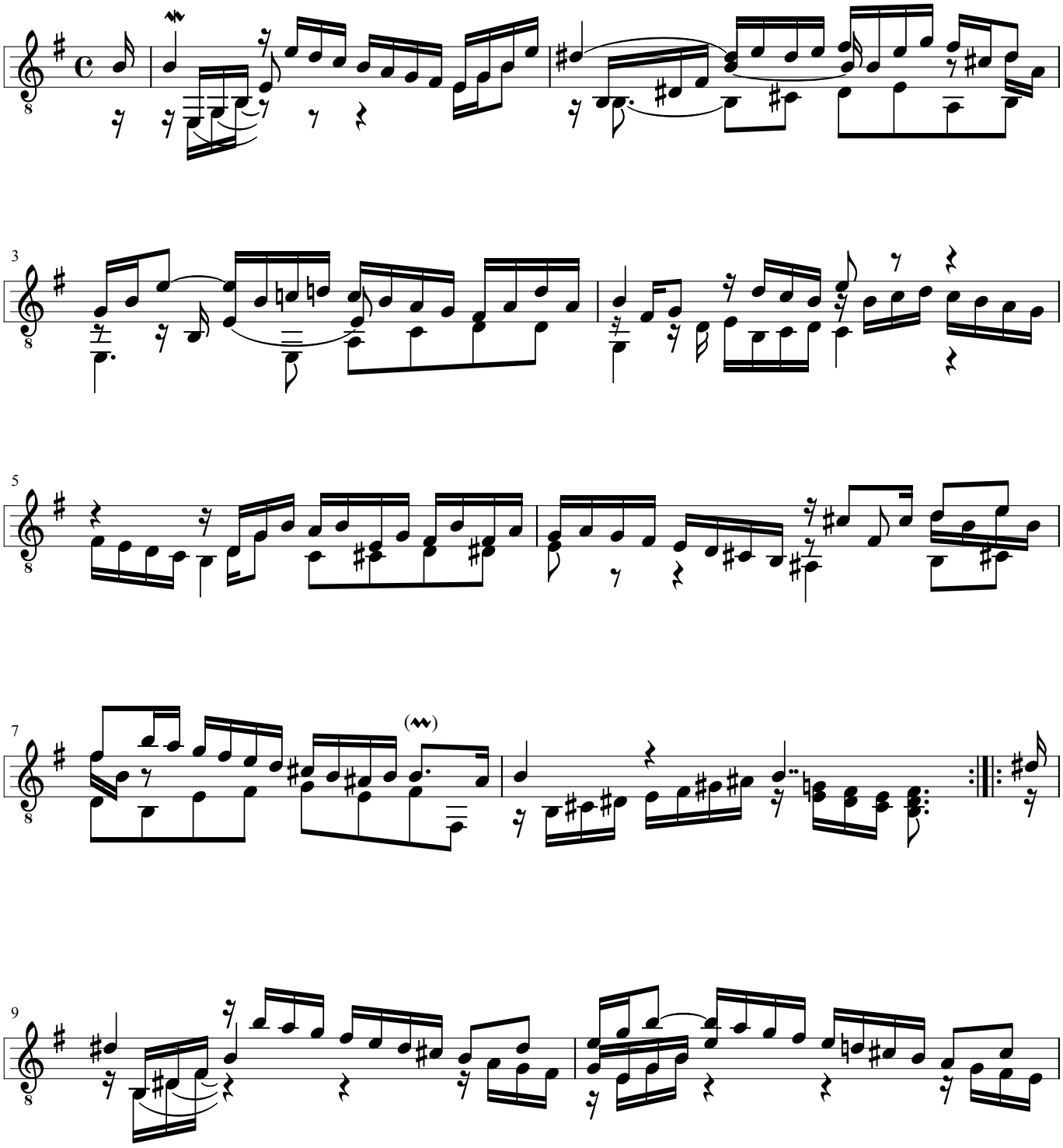
**Allemande**



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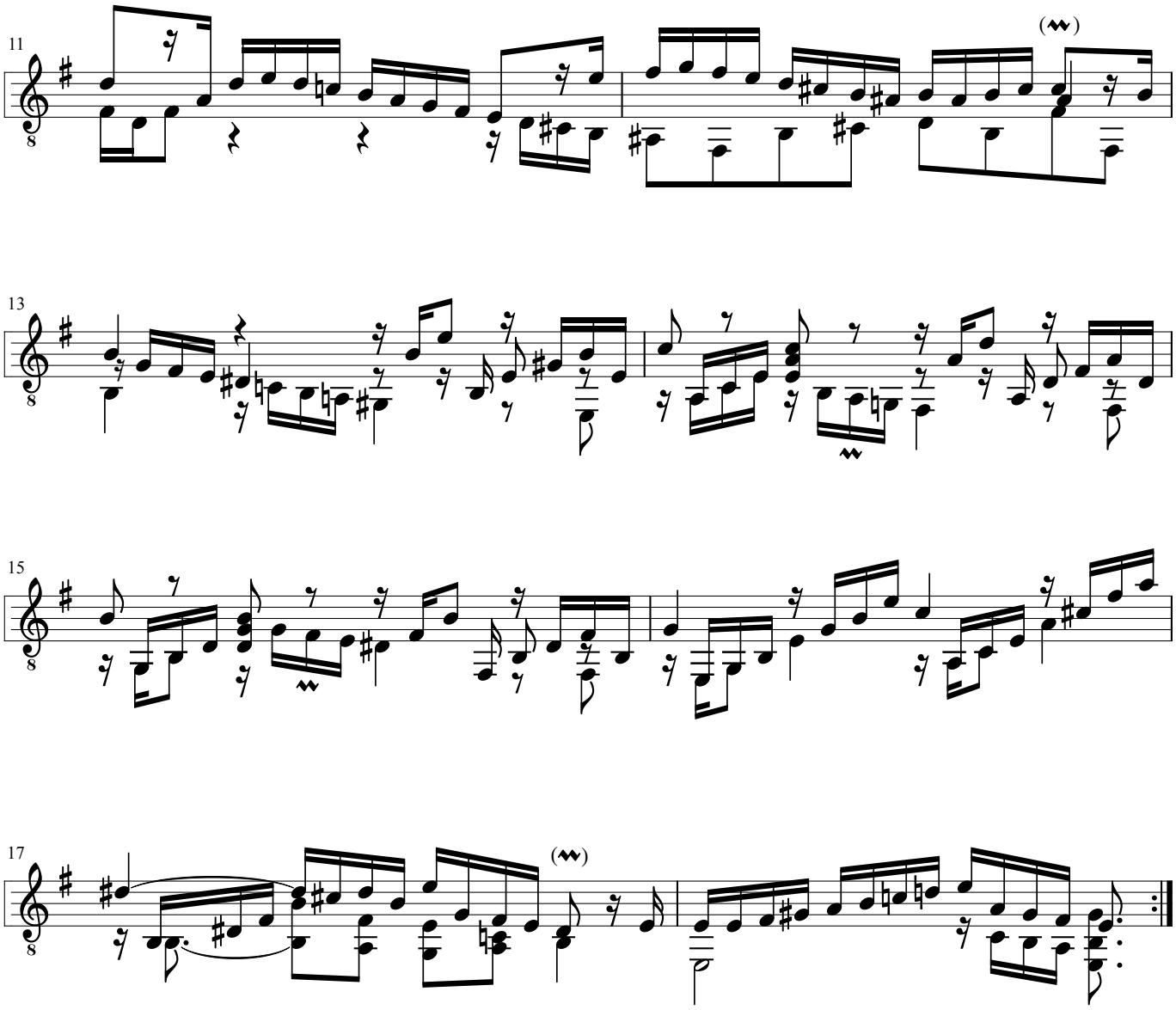


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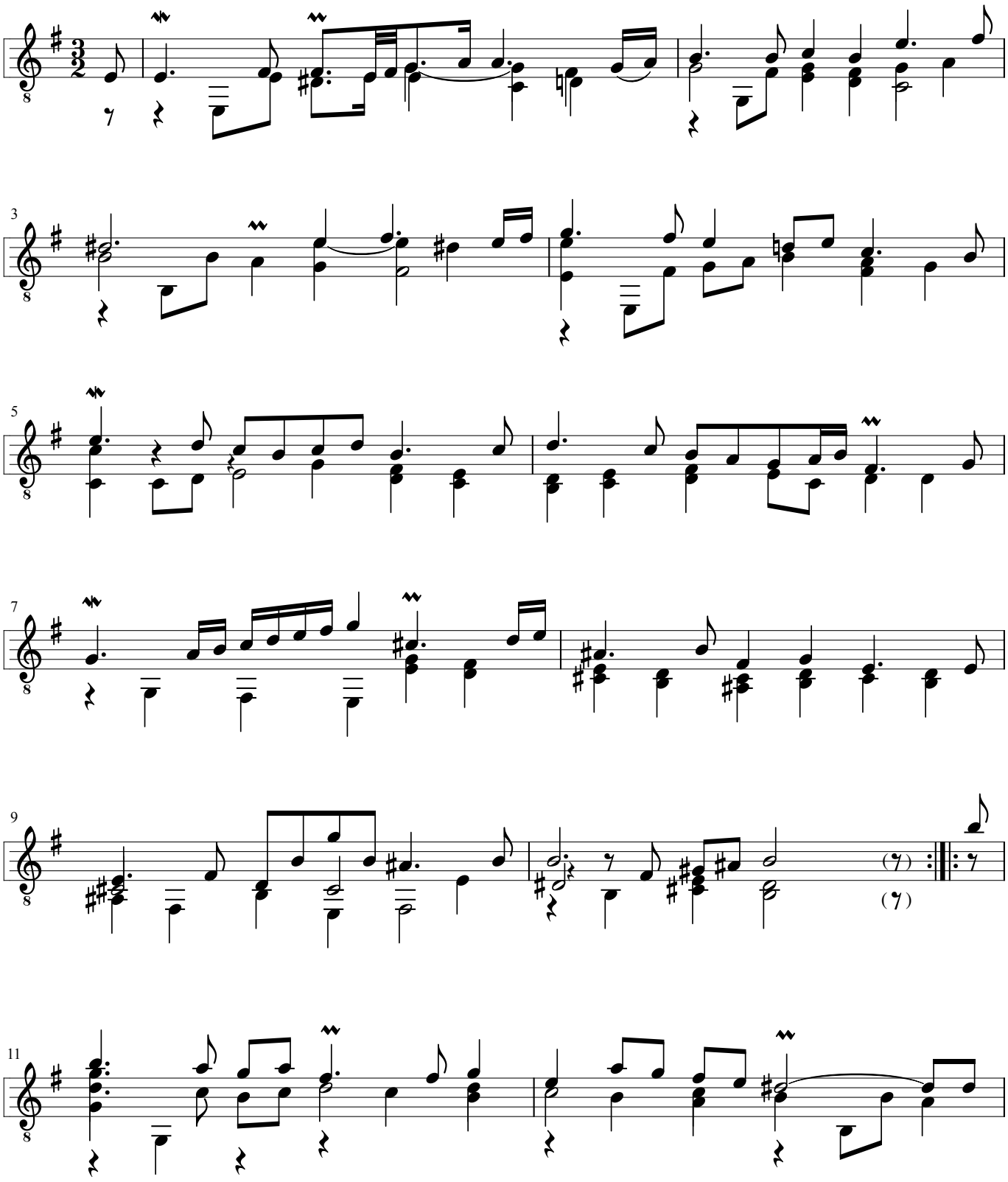
**Courante**



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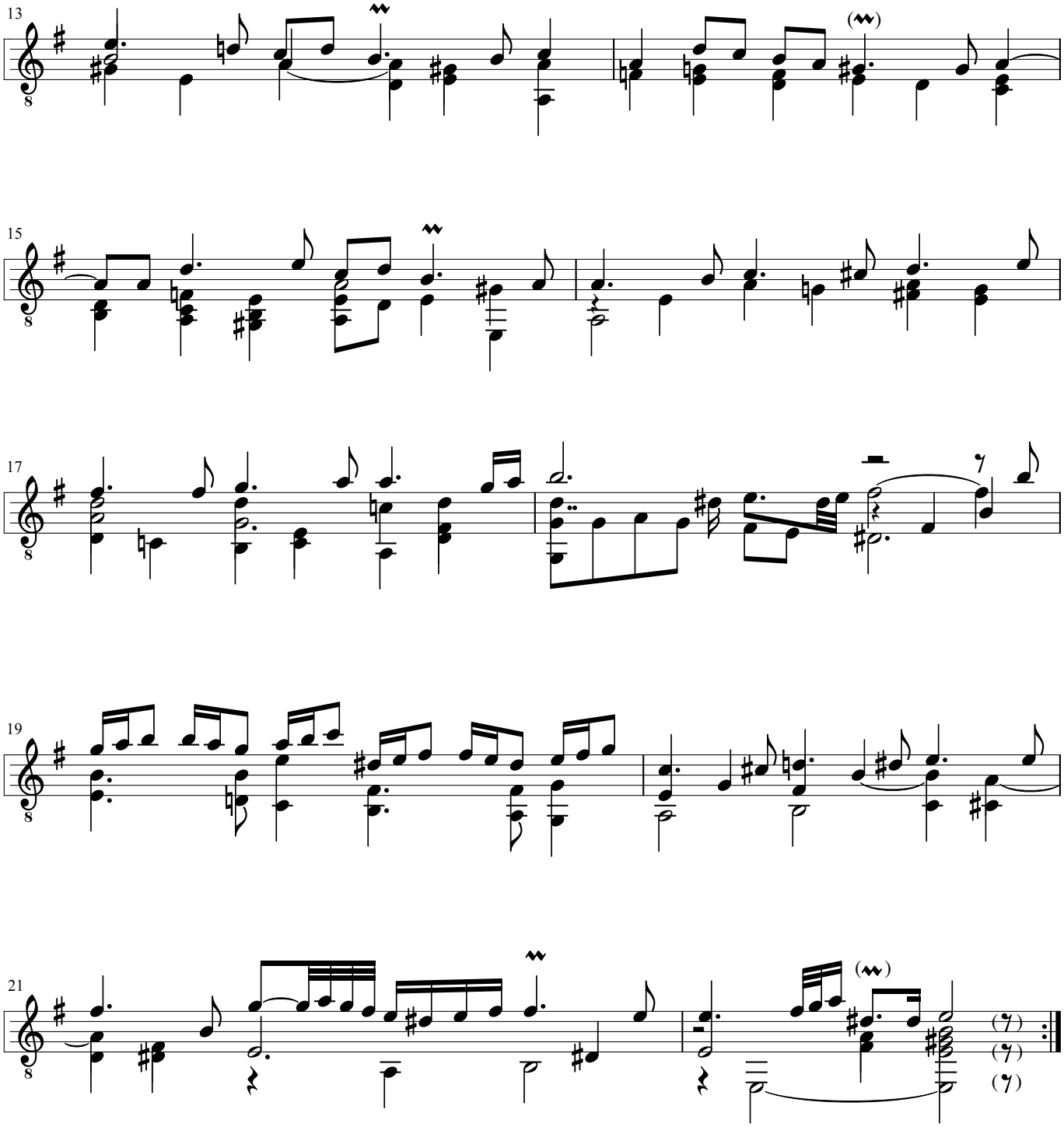


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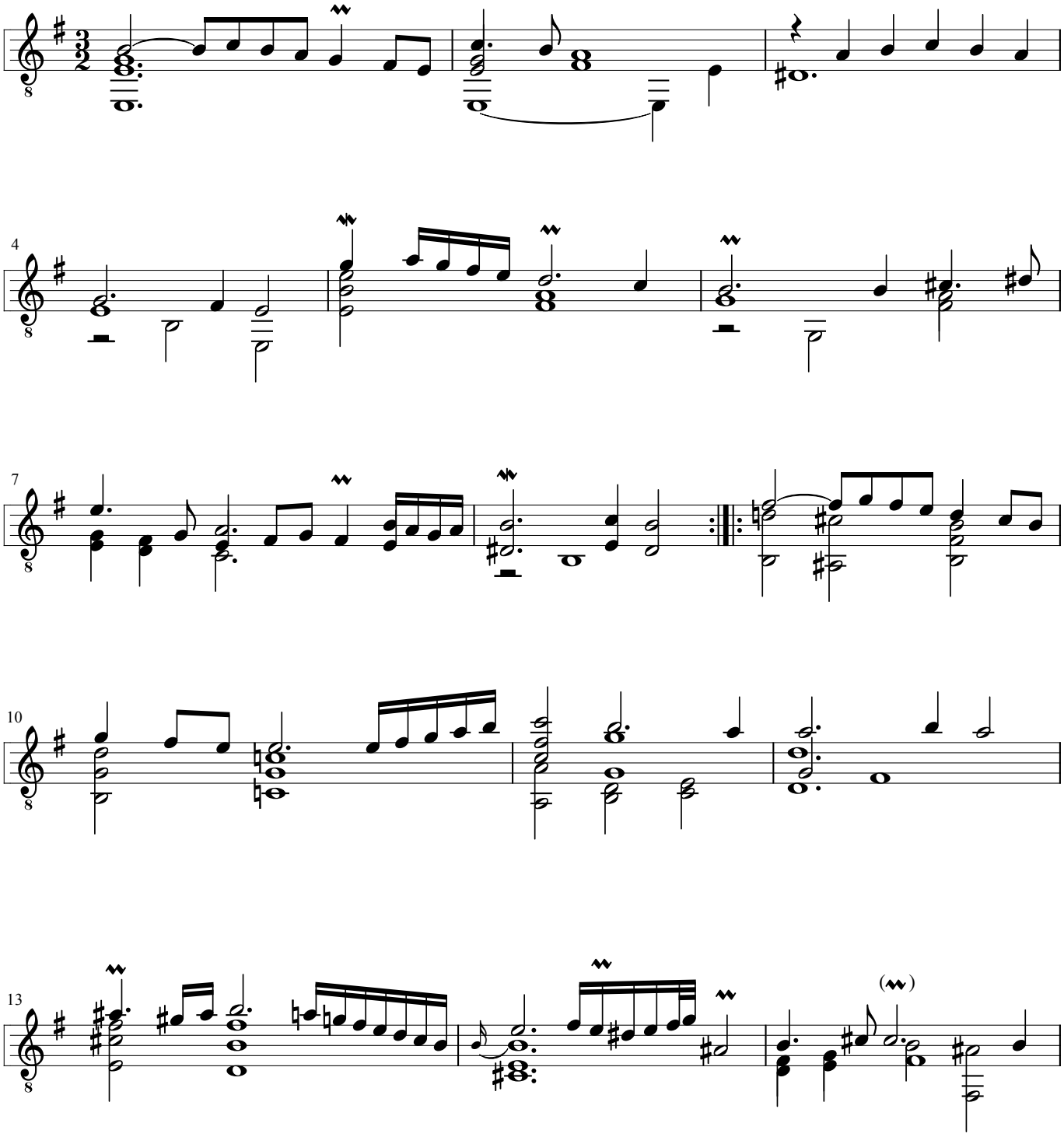
**Sarabande**



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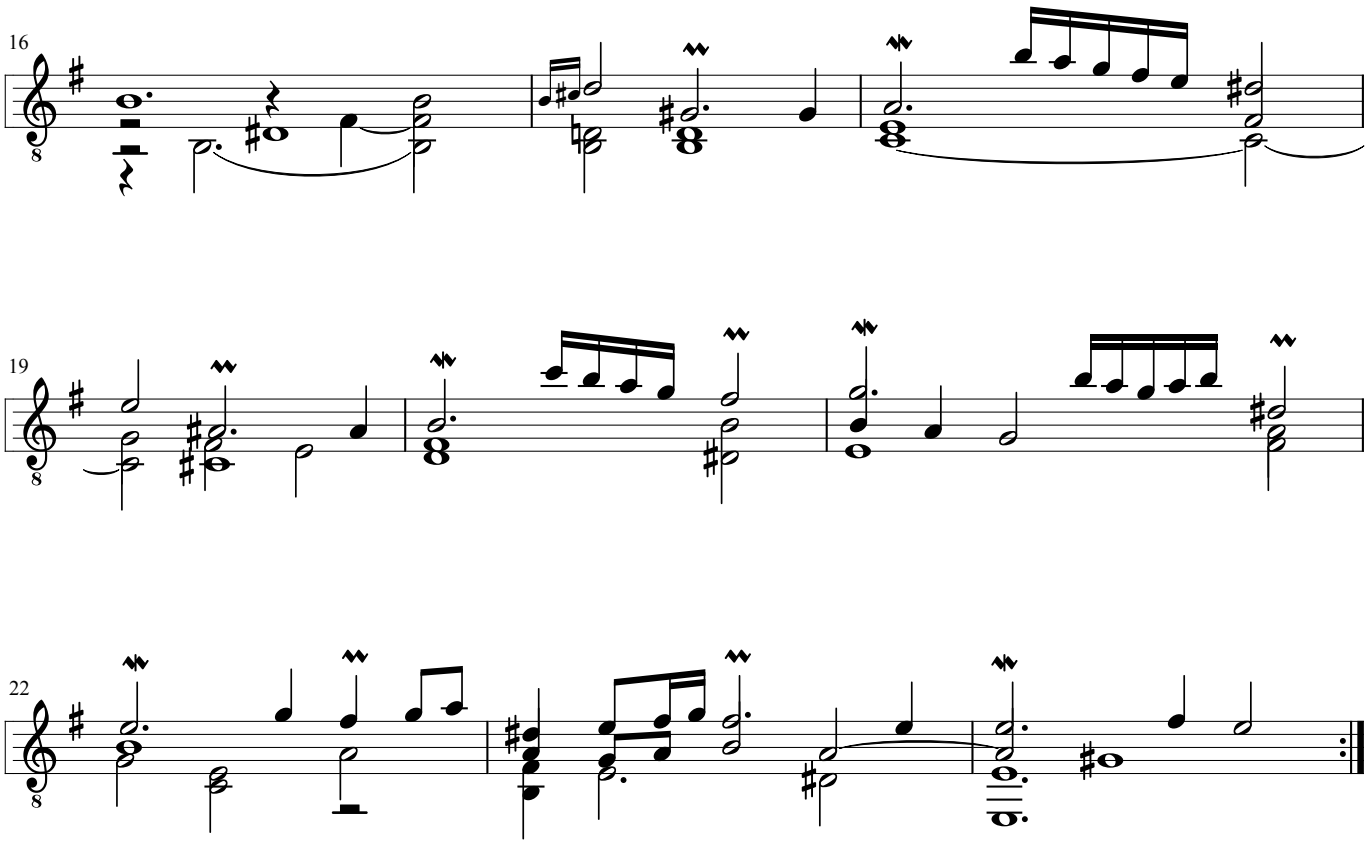


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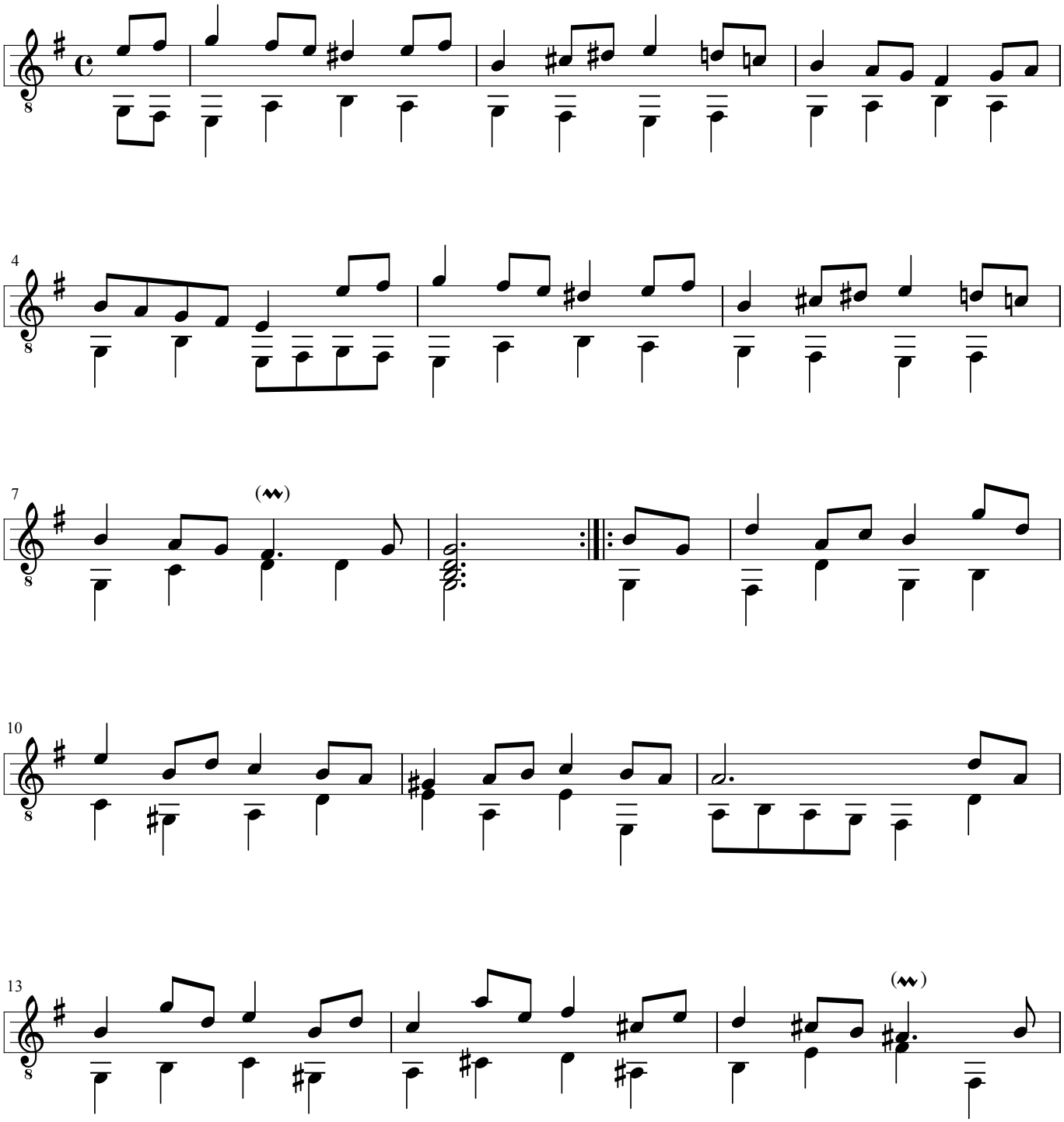
**Bourée**



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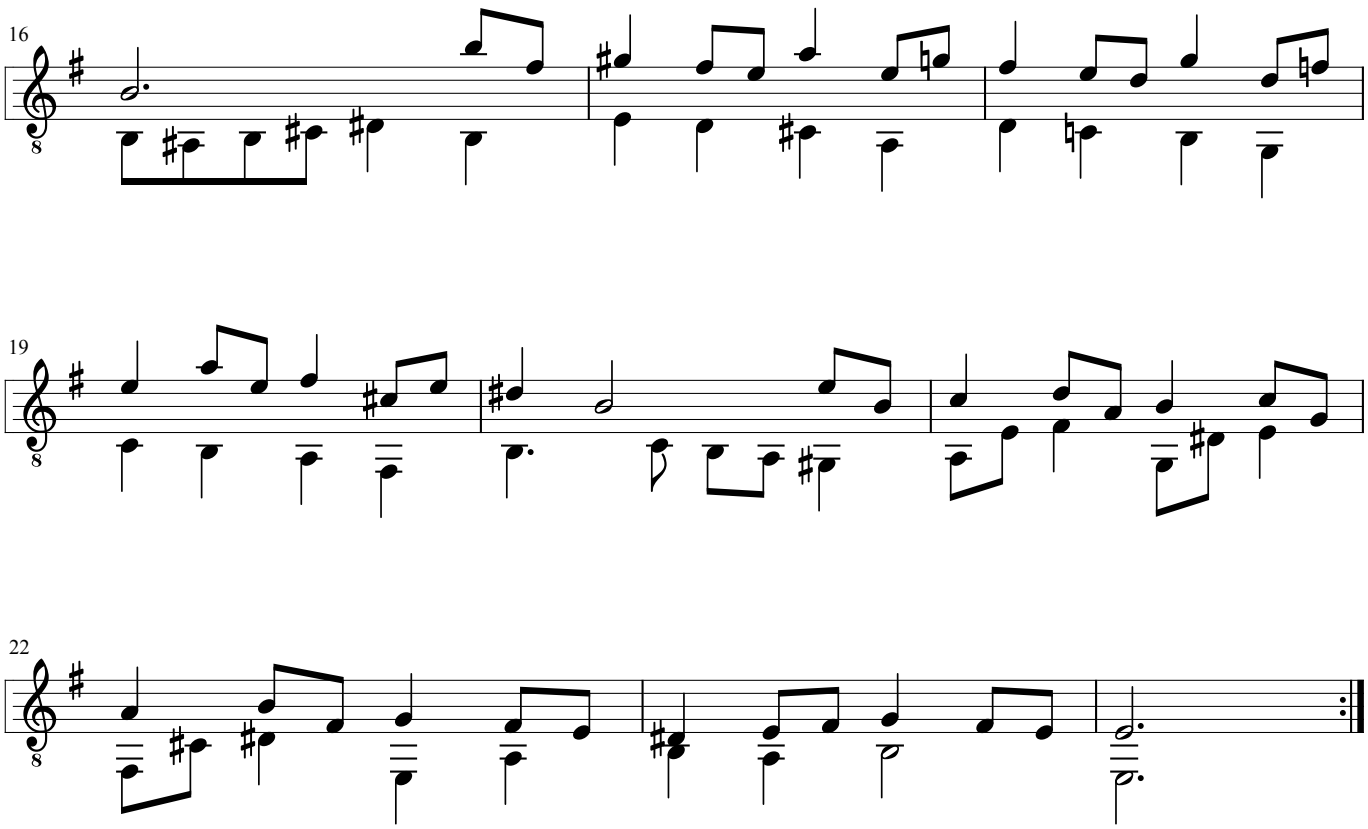


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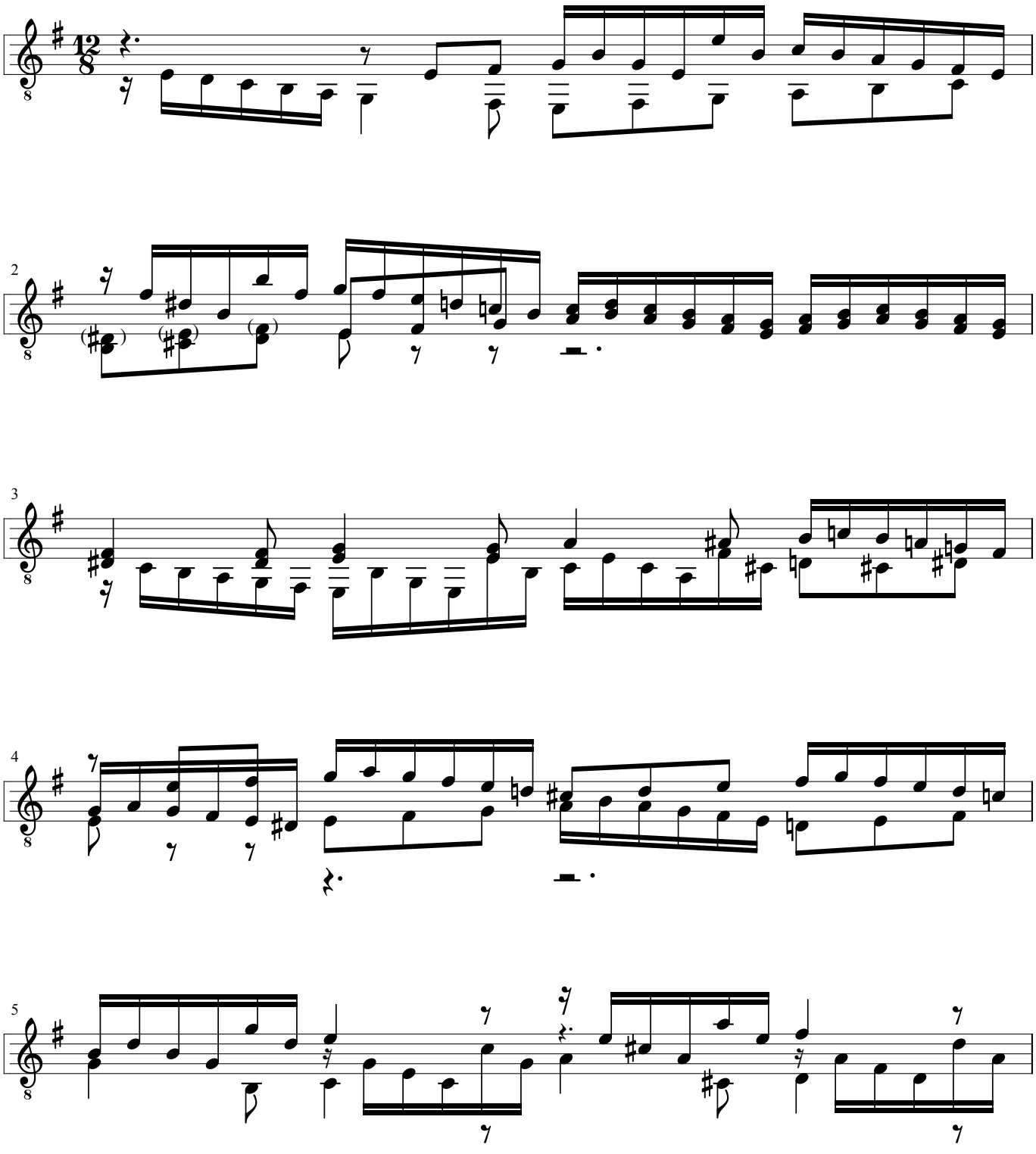
**Giga**



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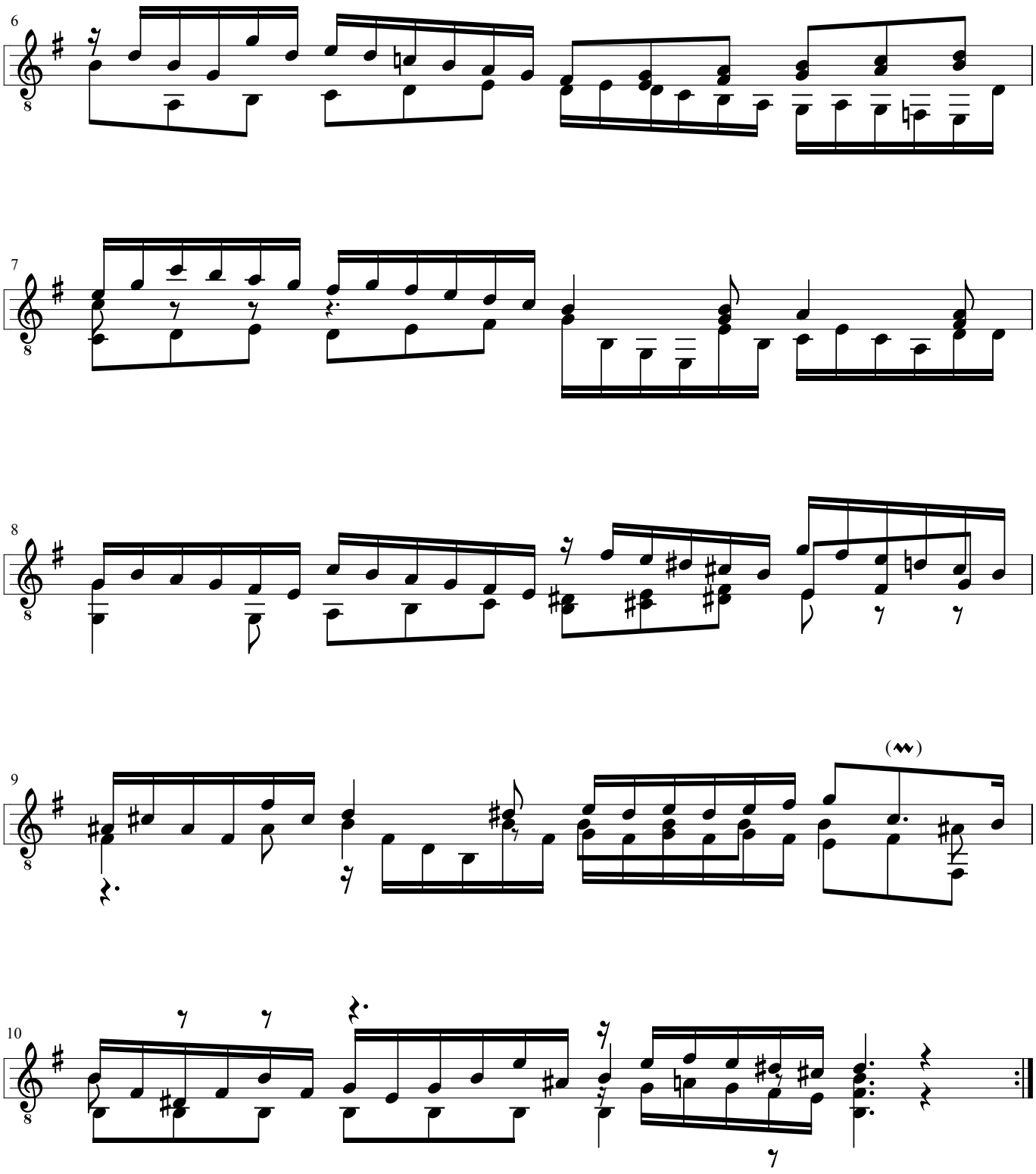


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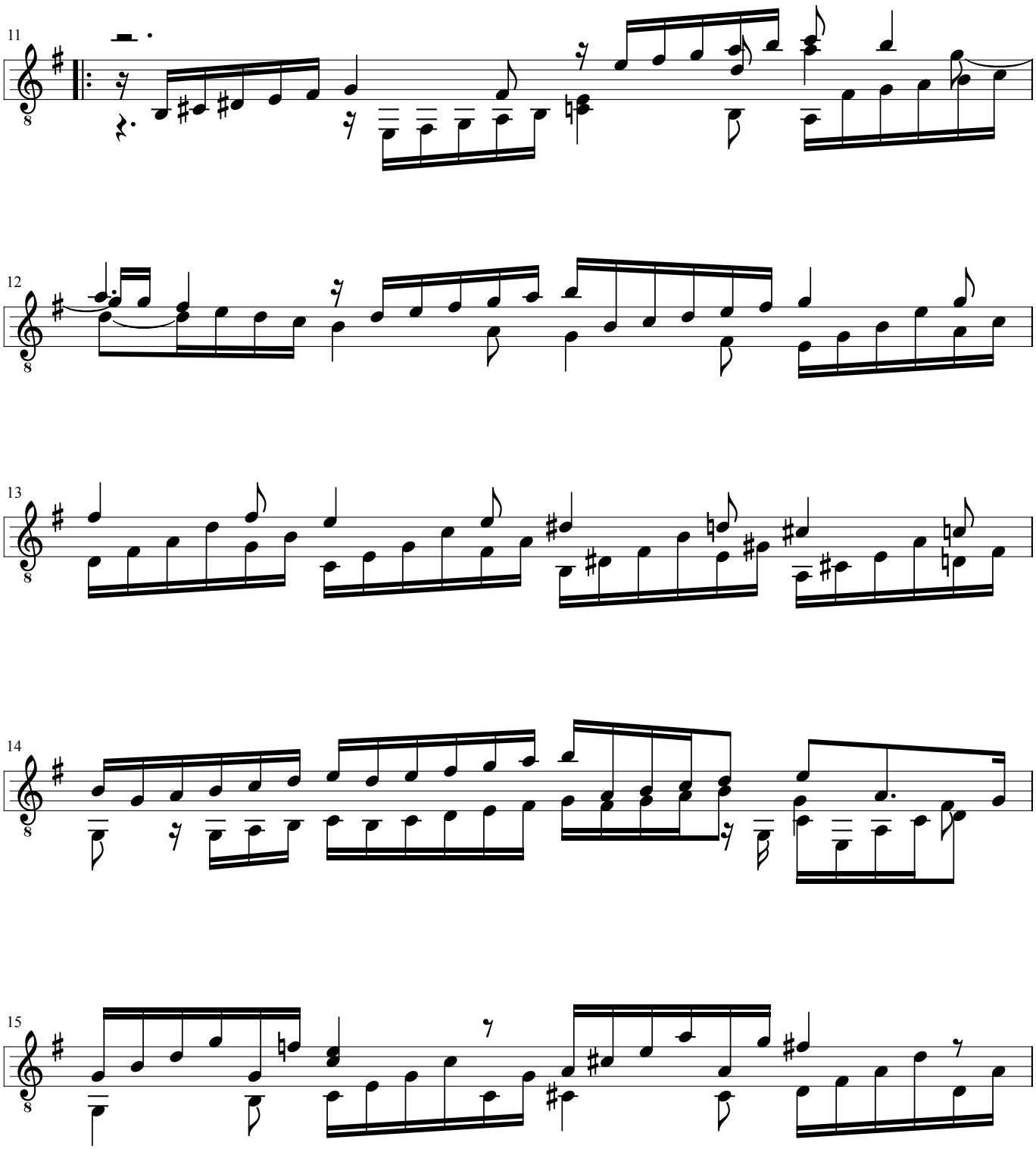


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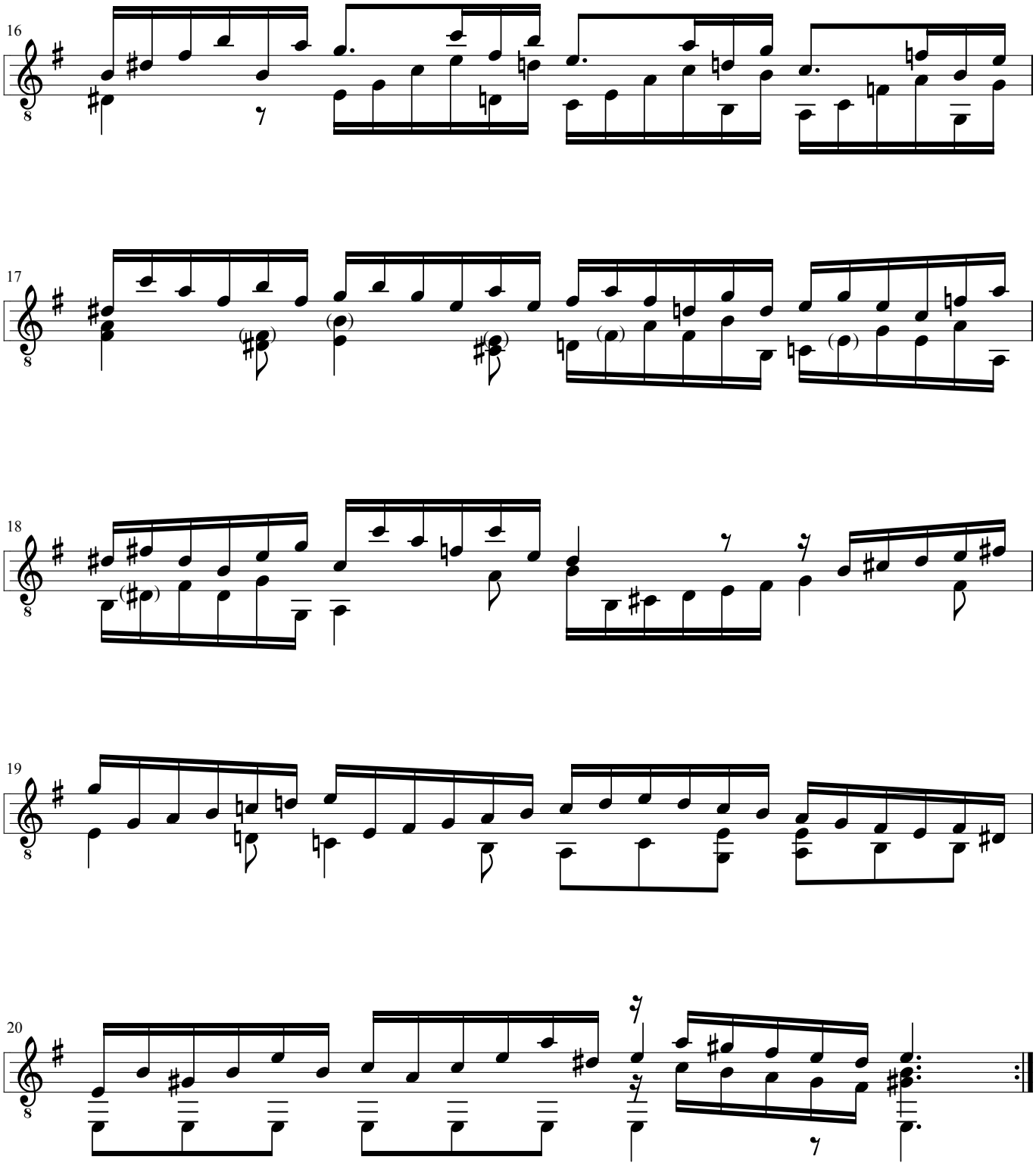


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